

RIVISTA MILITARE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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RIVISTA MILITARE





14 | AI AND TARGETING

by Claudio Bertolotti

Through artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, we are witnessing the beginning of another military revolution (RMA, Revolution in Military Affairs). Like gunpowder, tanks, planes and the atomic bomb in the past, AI today is poised to define a new concept of warfare, its timing and space. With this in mind, states are making the best use of AI especially in "complex" urban areas where the distinction between combatants and civilians is blurred. By now, AI is an essential tool for military planning, cyber and information operations. We recently saw its applications in Ukraine to identify Russian targets and later with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in the Israel-Hamas war. However, the use of AI raises significant ethical questions, bringing attention to the role of human oversight. In 2024, the use of Lavender software in the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza was unveiled, the program developed by the IDF to identify targets

30 | ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE APPLIED TO LANGUAGE LEARNING

by Pietro Romano

The article discusses the state of the art of applying AI (Artificial Intelligence) to language learning. It is necessary to try to understand the phenomenon, orient ourselves and make informed decisions. However, we are facing a complex system that is not manageable. We must accept the need to metabolize change knowing that we have to rethink our relationship with the machine world. This is a new epistemological divide that presents us with an educational challenge where we run the risk of marginalizing the human factor. The risks of AI are numerous and vary in magnitude depending on the degree of autonomy and the effects they can have on the real and virtual world. In Defense, a security framework is essential, both in the management of personal data and because of the confidentiality that characterizes the military. The opportunities seem obvious in terms of increased involvement, direct support in

meeting training needs, availability of personalized content, progress monitoring, and time savings. The Army Foreign Languages School encourages faculty to use AI and is developing a design model that incorporates this new technology organically.

34 | HAS THE WORLD POPULATION STOPPED GROWING?

by Massimo Livi Bacci

Ten thousand years ago the world population hovered between five and ten million. Since then it has been growing at an ever-increasing pace, until now, leading, in the last hundred years, to three successive doubling with the world population exceeding eight billion. According to the author there will be no new doubling during this century.

Over the past two centuries, the gradual improvement in survival has occurred in tandem with the progress in living conditions and the decline in infant mortality that has led couples to bring fewer children into the world. This adjustment of birth rate to lower mortality took time to occur, and in this interval of decades the population accelerated in growth, only to slow it down as birth control spread, mortality declined further, and population growth tended toward zero. This process first occurred in advanced Western societies from the early nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, and then in poorer societies in the global south-where it has not yet ended-since the mid-twentieth century where it must be kept in mind that the world is coexisting with populations that are at different stages of the transition process.

46 | EUROPEAN DEFENSE COMMUNITY: STORY OF A HOPE

by Lara Piccardo

The European Defense Community (EDC) represented an ambitious European defense project that failed to materialize in the 1950s, causing great regret today. Who were the initiators of this far-reaching politico-mil-

itary initiative? Why did it run aground in 1954 despite the approval of the German, Belgian, Dutch and Luxembourg parliaments, with Italy and France as major players? The recent Russian-Ukrainian war has forcefully reopened the debate of the European military and the strategic autonomy of the EU. The history of EU construction presents a crucial moment when Europe seemed very close to the creation of its own army and the emergence of a single federal state. Initially, there was a general consensus on the basic principles: integration of armed forces under the control of common supranational institutions, non-discrimination among member states, cooperation with NATO, and the purely defensive and peaceful character of the new organization. But later, in a rapidly changing international context; the death of Stalin, the end of the Korean War, and the possibility of a Soviet invasion becoming less and less concrete. The question of a European army became less urgent, leading to project failure.

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ENEMY FEMICIDE

by Paola Pucci

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on November 25, the Ministry of Defense sponsored two events for a time of reflection and discussion, with a focus on projects in progress. Undersecretary of State for Defense, with responsibility for the promotion of gender equality, Senator Isabella Rauti presented the publication, "Italian Defense's Commitment to Women's Empowerment and Strategies for the Prevention of Gender-based Violence." The conference, held at Palazzo Madama, is part of a multifaceted project that the senator is pursuing. "Together Against Gender Violence" was the theme of the other event: a conference sponsored by the CUG - Single Committee of Guarantee of the Ministry of Defense, held at Palazzo Guidoni. Initiatives that see Defense at the forefront, both domestically and in international missions, in accordance with UN Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security".

68

ONE WOMAN'S COURAGE

by Anna Maria Isastia

In a diary that began on January 30, 1943 and ended with the arrival of the Allies, Iris Origo, tells the story of an entire community, in Val d'Orcia, in the complicated two-year period that was 1943/'44.

English by birth and Italian by adoption having married Marquis Antonio Origo, with whom she created "La Foce" (estates, farm, oil mill, kindergarten, etc.). It was precisely La Foce that became the hub of a complex world where Germans, fascists, partisans, displaced families, and escaped prisoners intersected. Iris guaranteed shelter, assistance and aid to the needy, and supported the partisan bands. For this the Origos were put under special surveillance and Iris risked being taken to a concentration camp as an Anglo-American. Her diary was published abroad in '47 (in Italy in '68) and her story deserves to be told.





34 | CAPTAGON

by Pierluigi Bussi

Captagon is a drug composed of amphetamines and caffeine, widely used in the Middle East, particularly among Islamic Jihad and ISIS militants. This drug induces a sense of invulnerability, reduces the perception of fear and pain, enhances concentration, and can induce hallucinations. Its production is low-cost, leading to enormous profits. Not only does the Captagon trade pose a serious threat to the stability of the Middle East, but it has also infiltrated the illicit markets of the Gulf Arab monarchies, becoming one of the most prevalent addictions among young people. Syria and Lebanon are the leading producers of Captagon. Methamphetamines were historically used as a covert weapon that contributed to Hitler's victories, but they also proved catastrophic for those who endured the atrocities committed by the Nazis. In a disturbing parallel, the actions of terrorist groups in the Middle East appear to mirror the tactics of the German armed forces, who operated under the influence of drugs.

38 | WAR OVER, TERROR CONTINUES

by Giampaolo Cadalanu

The author, a veteran war correspondent for La Repubblica who has reported from numerous conflict zones over the past decades, examines the lasting impact of war. Using data and real-world examples, he highlights the devastating effects of unexploded ordnance, which continues to claim lives long after hostilities have ended. From cluster bombs (first used in 1935) to UXOs and abandoned anti-personnel mines, conflicts from Spain to Cambodia to Afghanistan have left behind these so-called 'zombie weapons'—deadly remnants capable of killing even after the fighting has ceased. According to the author, this

grim reality reinforces a harsh truth: the legacy of war is always one of destruction.

42 | A SHIELD OF MISSILES

by Andrea Spada

The author analyses the structure of Israel's air defence system, which—according to internal data—is considered highly effective. It comprises multiple integrated missile systems, some developed and produced exclusively in Israel and others created in collaboration with US companies. The article also provides a chronological overview of anti-missile defence deployment, including the use of the U.S. THAAD system, supplied by the American administration to support its Middle Eastern ally.

50 | PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY

by Giuseppe Cacciaguerra

Wars are ultimately won when both those who fight and those who support the armed forces believe victory is achievable. Adolf Hitler understood this early on and appointed Joseph Goebbels as the Reich's chief propagandist to shape reality in alignment with his goals. Goebbels' methods can be viewed as a precursor to the modern concept of psychological operations.

58 | A NEW STRATEGIC DOMAIN: TRAINING

by Andrea Di Stasio and Marco Tontini

The article aims to illustrate the innovations introduced by the Army Non-Commissioned Officers School, recently redefined as the 'Single Hub' for NCO training, to adapt its educational offering and

remain consistently responsive to the needs of an Army engaged in complex and continuously evolving operational scenarios.

These innovations are designed to strengthen the practical and decision-making skills of NCO trainees, focusing on flexibility, leadership, and resource management in dynamic environments. Training is enriched through cutting-edge technologies, such as virtual simulation and drones, with special emphasis on STEM disciplines.

In line with the vision of the Army Chief of Staff, the School places ethical values, technology, and operational training at its core to ensure that NCOs are fully prepared to operate effectively in any context.

approximately 10,000 troops) along with civilian volunteers. Training and education for these volunteers could be supported by the Military Branch Associations. These civilian volunteers could form an auxiliary reserve for national operations, consisting of about 5,000 troops. Creating a second-stage reserve, based on a study by the Army Research Centre, to be activated during acute crises--a Complementary Reserve of approximately 30,000 troops. In the event of an all-out war, general mobilisation would be required, including the reinstatement of conscription.

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WHAT RESERVE FORCES FOR THE ARMY?

by Luigi Chiapperini

The article begins by examining the international context, highlighting how the current size of the standing forces is insufficient to meet operational requirements both abroad and at home.

Furthermore, the organisation of reserve forces appears to be inadequate to address the rapidly changing scenarios where crises can rapidly escalate into open conflicts. This underscores the urgent need for modular reserves with varying levels of readiness available within a defined timeframe. The article proposes a potential solution, which includes: Establishing a first-stage reserve in peacetime, consisting of personnel on leave who remain subject to recall for a set number of years (an operational reserve of





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TECHNOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

by Giovanni Gagliano

Never before has the art of command undergone such a rapid evolution as in the last decade. Digitisation has revolutionised the battlefield, making it 'transparent' through weapon systems, sensors, remotely piloted vehicles and satellites that provide a real-time view of operations. As a result, the command-and-control function acts as a force multiplier for commanders, who now require technological skills that were previously unnecessary. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in the training of future leaders.

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HEAVY TANK: YES OR NO?

by Fulvio Poli

Discussing heavy tanks today might seem out of place unless we are referring to the world wars or the Cold War. However, this perception is changing. Recent conflicts, particularly the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, indicate that the time has come to develop and deploy heavy tanks once again. The tank was introduced during the First World War as a means to breach the heavily fortified German front lines. In the Second World War, the Germans developed one of the most famous tanks in history: the Panzerkampfwagen VI Tiger. By the end of the Second World War, heavy tanks had suddenly disappeared, replaced by the 'universal' Main Battle Tank (MBT), which was considered capable of handling any military task. Although it was believed that new, powerful anti-tank missiles had rendered heavy tanks obsolete, the true cause of their decline was limited defence budgets. To demonstrate the validity of our thesis, it is essential to examine the experiences of the Germans and Soviets during World War II. The Germans developed and deployed the Panther and Tiger tanks in dedicated autonomous heavy tank battalions, which operated using two main strategies: attacking the flanks or rear of enemy forces pinned down by other tank units; or launching frontal assaults or strikes on one flank, exploiting their superior armour and firepower. The Soviets had a slightly different approach. Their

strategy was similar but often more reckless, as they were less concerned about human and material losses. In urban combat, the Soviets made extensive use of heavy tanks. They favoured forming mixed tank and infantry units, believing that already integrated, close-knit combat teams were more effective. Based on the experiences mentioned above, it is necessary to develop a new heavy tank that offers sufficient tactical mobility, supported by a cutting-edge engine, transmission, and track system. This tank should provide advanced all-around protection, particularly against drones, including First Person View (FPV) drones and loitering munitions. Additionally, it should have powerful firepower with calibres of 130mm, 140mm, or even larger. This new vehicle should pave the way for replacing the Main Battle Tank, proving once again that the 'one size fits all' approach cannot adequately satisfy the varied needs of all customers.

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ARMENIA ON THE BRINK OF FAREWELL TO THE CSTO

by Pierluigi Bussi

Armenia may be on the verge of leaving the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) while simultaneously strengthening its ties with the West. The EU's growing involvement in supporting reforms in this traditionally pro-Russian country is provoking negative reactions from the Russian government. The CSTO, modelled after NATO, was founded on 7 October 2002 by Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Its goal is to create the conditions for comprehensive development, ensure the sovereignty of each member state, and mitigate the risks of a potential security vacuum in the region. Armenia's potential exit from the organisation, driven by differences with the Kremlin, could generate troubling scenarios for Moscow, including the real risk of Russian forces withdrawing from the two military bases in Yerevan and Gyumri. This fracture is a significant shift in the Armenian government's geopolitical stance, aimed at pursuing greater autonomy, aligning more closely with Western powers,

and expanding cooperation beyond that. This strategic change could reshape the power dynamics in the South Caucasus and challenge long-standing economic and security dependencies.

44 | THE BATTLE FOR HOSTOMEL AIRPORT

by Stefano Monteduro

The battle for Hostomel Airport marked a decisive turning point in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. Military analysts identify it as the moment when the Russian military campaign shifted from a blitzkrieg strategy to a war of attrition. In the days leading up to the invasion, representatives of Western intelligence briefed the Ukrainian General Staff on what was likely to be Russia's military plan.

Moscow's forces targeted Hostomel airport for the size of its runways and its strategic position along the planned axis of advance for ground troops.

Within a few hours, Hostomel was lost, seized, lost again — but ultimately rendered unusable for the Russian war effort.

The analysis of this battle offers key insights, particularly the critical need to adapt as quickly as possible to rapidly changing circumstances in order to gain an advantage over the adversary.

48 | WHAT IS A NATION?

by Eliana Augusti

The concept of “nation” refers to a community of people sharing common elements such as language, culture, history, and sometimes religion or tradition. A nation is defined by a sense of belonging and collective identity that unites its members. This analysis examines the evolution of this concept, from the rise of early nationalisms to the present day, shaped by multiculturalism and globalisation.

52 | INNOVATION, SECURITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY

by Massimiliano Gatti

Artificial intelligence (AI) is one of the most significant innovations of our time, and its impact on the military domain is expected to grow. The adoption of these technologies requires a responsible approach that carefully balances innovation with security. This article examines the Israeli army's use of AI-driven systems during the Gaza conflict, highlighting outcomes that have been subject to criticism.

68 | HYDROGEN-POWERED FUEL CELLS

by Marco Scafati

The use of hydrogen-powered fuel cells holds real potential for achieving sustainable and environmentally friendly mobility in the future. The main challenge lies in finding effective solutions for hydrogen storage and expanding the refuelling infrastructure network. Developing ‘green’ hydrogen production, potentially through renewable technologies, is also crucial. For the large-scale adoption of this fuel system, reducing the currently high costs is essential to enable mass deployment.





24 | UNDERGROUND WARFARE COMPARED

by Dario Citati

The use of tunnels, galleries, and underground passages for military purposes is one of the oldest stratagems in the art of war. Recently, several countries have attempted to develop a conceptual framework for this unique environment.

The article analyses and compares the tunnel systems of Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon, as well as how the Israeli Defence Forces address them. The IDF use a classification system based on tangible tactical-level military uses, identifying three categories: offensive, defensive, and logistical tunnels.

26 | ROCK'N'ROLL & BIKERS

by Nicola Cristadoro

After the Second World War, many veterans returning to America struggled to readjust to civilian life. For men who had grown accustomed to the excitement and danger internalised during the war, everyday life felt intolerably dull. This was true not only for those who had fought in the European and Pacific theatres, but also for many Korean War veterans.

Some sought out the adventure and adrenaline reminiscent of combat. Others longed for the close bonds and camaraderie they had shared with their fellow soldiers. To give expression to these needs, many joined motorcycle clubs organized as military units. A similar phenomenon occurred in Russia in the early 1980s—though with different implications.

38 | NATO NEEDS INTEGRATION

by Giorgio Giosafatto

The conflict in Ukraine has compelled Europe to prepare for uncertain scenarios and strengthen the arsenals of its land forces. Operational agility, resilience, and technological sophistication have made it necessary to field diversified and adaptable forces and to invest in modernisation. The conflict has also highlighted the central role of artillery systems. At the same time, it has underscored the pressing need for force integration—emphasising the importance of joint operations among the armies of different nations and of having compatible command and control systems capable of providing commanders with a constantly updated and realistic operational picture.

40 | THE THREAT OF DISINFORMATION

by Marco Ferrara

Since its founding in 1949, the Atlantic Alliance has addressed information threats. However, following Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea (Ukraine) in 2014, hostile information activities have significantly increased, undermining the right to information—one of the cornerstones of modern democracies.

NATO's new approach to countering so-called information threats incorporates short-, medium-, and long-term response options to ensure operational flexibility while supporting the Alliance's strategic communication goals and priorities. A key component of this strategy is the establishment of the NATO Rapid Response Group (NRRG), a collective mechanism composed of NATO experts capable of detecting, reporting, and responding swiftly to disinformation threats.

As part of this broader effort, NATO has also launched a public awareness campaign to encourage citizens to take an active role in countering disinformation. The campaign highlights five key practices for identifying fake news and limiting its spread through social media.

Education remains one of the most powerful tools in the fight against disinformation. Critical evaluation of sources and critical thinking should be considered key elements of civic education—especially at a time when AI-generated content and other emerging technologies can distort our perception of reality. Therefore, while awaiting regulation at both European and national levels, education and training are the most effective means to confront the dangers of disinformation.

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SCIENCE FICTION GETS REAL

by Marco Scafati

The technological evolution of weapon systems presents us with solutions that, until recently, could only be imagined—or seen in science fiction films. Today, laser guns and electromagnetic weapons have become a reality, thanks to the development and experimentations carried out by the armed forces of the world's most advanced countries. This article outlines how these two systems work, their advantages and drawbacks, and how they are being employed—both in testing and in real-world operations across various scenarios.

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EUROPEAN DEFENCE BEGINS WITH EDUCATION

by Massimiliano Perrotta

The current international political scenario demands serious reflection on the need for Europe to establish a common defence. Beyond equipment and capabilities, such a project must inevitably involve human capital, requiring specific military education. Personnel provided by the various member states must take part in a programme that transcends national sovereignties, fostering a shared foundation of knowledge and mutual understanding.

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GIUSEPPE “PEPPINO” GARIBALDI

by Francisco Antonio Enríquez Rojas

Giuseppe “Peppino” Garibaldi, grandson of the famed Italian unifier Giuseppe Garibaldi, is an emblematic figure of the Mexican Revolution, where he distinguished himself with passion and courage in the struggle for social justice. Born in Melbourne in 1879, he inherited his family's adventurous spirit and took part in numerous international conflicts before joining the Mexican revolutionary movement against the regime of Porfirio Díaz. In 1911, he led the “Foreign Legion”, a group of international fighters, playing a key strategic role in the capture of Ciudad Juárez—a vital hub for the arms trade.

Although his foreign origin aroused suspicion among some leaders, Francisco I. Madero—the foremost leader of the revolutionary movement—vigorously defended Garibaldi, comparing him to other international heroes such as Lafayette and Francisco Xavier Mina. Madero's words cemented Garibaldi's role in the struggle for freedom, underscoring the significance of his commitment to the rights of the oppressed.

The victory at Ciudad Juárez marked a turning point, leading to the resignation of Díaz and the beginning of a new democratic era. After the Revolution, Garibaldi continued his battles across the world, but his impact remained indelible in Mexico. Today, his name lives on in symbolic places such as Plaza Garibaldi—the vibrant heart of Mexican music and culture—standing as a lasting testament to his legacy of justice and freedom.





30 | ONLINE HATE: NEW FORMS, NEW TARGETS

by Silvia Brena

How does online hate manifest itself today? And what danger does the spread of hate speech pose as a driver of social disintegration and a tool for advancing strategies that threaten the country's security and social cohesion? The eighth edition of the "Map of Intolerance" proposes investigating these issues. The project was conceived by Vox – Italian Observatory on Rights, in collaboration with the University of Milan (Department of Italian and Supranational Public Law and Giovanni Degli Antoni Department of Computer Science) and the University of Bari Aldo Moro, with contributions from the data analysis company "The Fool".

38 | ABANDONED SHIPS AND "PRISONER" CREWS

by Andrea Spada

According to United Nations organisations focused on maritime labour and policy, more ships than ever are being abandoned by their owners worldwide, leaving thousands of workers stranded on board without pay or the means to return home to their families. The number of such cases has nearly doubled in the past three years, particularly since the start of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In 2024 alone, more than 3,000 seafarers were affected on approximately 230 ships.

42 | FORCE AGAINST REASON

by Giampaolo Cadalanu

When a war breaks out, people hope it will be short-lived and that a political solution to the conflict will be found quickly-ideally before lives are lost and destruction begins. However, 21st-century conflicts seem to carry a new, somewhat unexpected and certainly dangerous trait: the potential to poison the future, weakening or even nullifying the mechanisms that promote peace.

46 | IS A NEW MEDIUM TANK NECESSARY?

by Fulvio Poli

The medium tank was developed during the First World War to exploit the gaps opened by heavy tanks in enemy lines and continue the advance deep into enemy territory. The idea was to revitalise the role of the cavalry, which had been pinned down by the firepower of machine guns and howitzers. Today, this asset seems more necessary than ever-with the required updates. Education remains one of the most powerful tools in the fight against disinformation. Critical evaluation of sources and critical thinking should be considered key elements of civic education-especially at a time when AI-generated content and other emerging technologies can distort our perception of reality. Therefore, while awaiting regulation at both European and national levels, education and training are the most effective means to confront the dangers of disinformation.

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INTEGRATING LAND AND AIR

by Francesco Ludovico

The increasing complexity of modern military operations-particularly the development of Anti-Access Area Denial (A2AD) capabilities by the Russian Federation-has challenged the air supremacy of the Atlantic Alliance.

In response to the threat posed by A2AD, tactical-level commands must reinvest in Air Land Integration (ALI) and implement targeted measures, especially in warfighting scenarios.

Several countries are establishing Joint Air Ground Integration Centres (JAGIC) at the Corps level. However, the need for effective ALI also applies to the divisional level for the proper conduct of operations. To address this need, the "Vittorio Veneto" Division in Florence has developed its own model-an effective and sustainable structure tailored to its command level. The resulting solution, known as the Augmented Joint Fires Support Element, or JFSE+ (JFSE Plus), is tasked with executing fire missions promptly, effectively engaging the enemy, synchronising effects, and minimising the risk of fratricidal fire.

Within this framework, the entry into force of Law No. 46 of 28 April 2022 marked one of the most significant changes in the Italian military system. The establishment of Professional Associations of a Trade Union Nature among Military Personnel (APCSM) has directly impacted leadership dynamics, introducing a participatory dimension into a system traditionally structured around the principle of vertical hierarchy.

This reform is not only legal but also cultural in nature: it has sparked debate on its effectiveness, impact, and the underlying motivations for its introduction. This article explores whether APCSMs represent an opportunity to foster a form of participatory leadership focused on personnel well-being, or whether they instead reflect a latent mistrust in the chain of command. The goal is to provide leaders in the defence sector with useful tools to understand APCSMs not as antagonistic entities, but as a resource for building effective, resilient leadership aligned with the needs of today's military personnel.

78

THE VISION OF AN OFFICER

by Giuseppe Cacciaguerra

Si vis pacem, para pacem. These words come from one of the leading anti-militarists of the early post-war period: Leonardo Gatto Roissard. A career officer from a noble family-as attested by the Heraldic Council-he was born in Venice on 24 June 1884 to Gaetano Gatto and Prospera Roissard di Bellet. His family had a strong military tradition.

70

THE INDIVIDUAL AT THE CENTRE

by Matteo Alamia

Discipline is the cornerstone of the organisation and functioning of the Armed Forces. It is embodied in the conscious observance of rules tied to military status, forming the fundamental code for citizens in uniform and serving as the primary driver of cohesion and operational effectiveness. The expressions "discipline and honour", "defence of the homeland", and "safeguarding of free institutions" punctuate the military oath and reflect a behavioural model rooted in ethics, obedience, esprit de corps, and sacrifice-defining a distinct cultural identity.





30 | FROM TIANJIN TO BEIJING

by Alessandro Aresu

No concrete measures emerged from the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in Tianjin or the subsequent military parade in Beijing marking the 80th anniversary of the victory over Japan in World War II, apart from the energy agreements between China and Russia. Nor did these events lead to a “new world order” centred on the Global South, according to the much-used formula often invoked on such occasions. Yet China’s power to convene was evident not only with the Russian president and figures such as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, but also with major global players like Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Turkish President Erdogan.

34 | TRAP ON THE HIGH SEAS

by Andrea Spada

A possible Chinese invasion of Taiwan would risk further exacerbating the already tense relations between the two superpowers, China and the United States. It would have disastrous economic repercussions, disrupting global maritime trade in the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait, and triggering international sanctions. Finally, the campaign to capture Taiwan would be the largest and most complex military operation in history - involving crossing the strait, creating a bridgehead and, above all, conducting a subsequent land campaign across the island’s rugged terrain.

38 | CHINESE DRONES: THE TWO-PRONGED APPROACH

by Marco Lupis

In the strategic theatre of the 21st century, drone warfare is no longer a question of “if”, but of “how”. While the United States and its allies refine the employment of unmanned systems - focusing on precision and minimising human risk - China is pursuing two parallel and complementary paths, which reveal much about its operational doctrine and regional ambitions: on the one hand, the latest-generation GJ-11 Sharp Sword stealth drone; on the other, the mass conversion of Soviet J-6 fighter jets into kamikaze drones.

46 | DO NOT CROSS THAT THRESHOLD

by Giampaolo Cadalanu

Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan both stressed this point at the 1985 Geneva summit, surprising the world with a shared perspective: ‘A nuclear war cannot be won and therefore must never be fought’. It is worth recalling those words as 5 February, the expiry date of the START treaty limiting the number of nuclear warheads and delivery systems deployed by the United States and Russia, is fast approaching. Vladimir Putin has proposed a one-year extension; Donald Trump has responded that it is ‘a good idea,’ and the agreement could be signed any day now. Perhaps, after all, Albert Einstein’s warning about humanity’s inevitable return to prehistory after a Third World War may not have fallen on deaf ears.

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LIGHT FORCES ARE KEY

by Franco Del Favero

This article examines the main features of the conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The Ukrainian army has deployed its light infantry units to conduct operations deep within enemy lines, achieving significant results against far more numerous and better-equipped opposing forces.

Having established that light forces in general, and Alpine troops in particular, remain indispensable in today's warfare scenarios, the analysis identifies the strengths to be enhanced and the aspects requiring improvement to increase combat capability and effectiveness on the battlefield. The first factor to consider is mobility; the second, lethality; the third, the reduction of electromagnetic emissions on the battlefield. Above all, however, the defining feature of tomorrow's Alpine troops will have to be logistical autonomy.

To remain effective and contribute successfully to the manoeuvring of medium and heavy forces, Alpine units must excel in dismounted combat, survival in hostile or non-permissive environments, logistical autonomy, individual and collective discipline, and initiative. All these skills are not innate: they must be developed and maintained through continuous training, in all weather and visibility conditions, and above all on mountain terrain.

68

MICRO-DRONES IN SMALLER UNITS

by Giustino Fortunato Nigro

Training today's small-unit commanders has become a key factor in the employment of new technologies, particularly Remotely Piloted Aircraft (UAVs), which - as current conflicts demonstrate - can play a decisive role. The current operational scenario has therefore led the 'Granatieri di Sardegna' Brigade to conduct a six-month series of trials with micro-drones to assess their capabilities and limitations, and to develop effective methods for their use by small-unit commanders.





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